

Parental Child Rearing Practices and Senior Secondary School Students Academic Achievement in Agricultural Science in Cross River State, Nigeria



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ABSTRACT: The study focused on parental child rearing practices and senior secondary school students' academic performance in Agricultural science in Cross River State, Nigeria. One research question and hypothesis was formulated to guide the study, and relevant literature were reviewed. An ex-post facto research design was adopted, which made use of a sample of 2,960 senior secondary school students in public schools in Cross River State.

Two (2) research instruments were employed to collect data namely; A 20-Item modified 4-likert scale questionnaire and (2) Test on Agricultural Science. The data analysis technique adopted was one – way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance, and the result revealed among others that, parental child rearing practice showed significant influence on senior secondary school students academic performance. The researchers recommended that parental/caregivers should be encouraged to adopt democratic style of child rearing practice than autocratic authoritarian or laissez-fair style.

KEYWORDS: Parental child Rearing Practices and students' Academic Achievement

INTRODUCTION

The home, as the first agent of socialization plays a vital role on the upbringing of the child in terms of societal norms, values, general beliefs and education of the child. Thus, the home nurtures the child and initiates the person into the norms of the wider society with the help of the adult members of the family.

A child is a product of his cultural environment. However, due to western and other influences, a purely authentic Nigerian culture does not exist any longer (Isangedighi, 2007) and by extension, a purely Nigerian child is a delusion.

A child reared in a home with a particular culture is assumed to have his life molded by that culture. Peoples beliefs, values, ideas and practices are moving away from the traditional to western oriented beliefs, values, ideas and practices because of the westernized education handed over to us. This is further influenced by urbanization process because of better facilities and exposure generally, making the children to lack awareness and understanding of the need for their cultural values.

In Nigeria, a child may be reared completely in an urban or rural area, while another may by the advantage of mobility and social strata or family ties experience both. Rural parents are more of primary group-society and tend to approach behaviour and attitude training in line with the type of traditional beliefs.

At the rural level, the child is brought up to respect the beliefs, values, roles and rules of conduct accepted in the setting as the right ones. He is discouraged from exploring alternative ways of doing things (Isangedighi, 2007 and Inyang, 2011).

The traditional child rearing practices in Nigerian society was based on character training and the inculcation of moral values. Fafunwa (2004) stated that, the African child rearing practices which is a form of education consists of the development of the child's physical skills, development of character, respect for elders, development of intellectual skills and vocational training.

Bortner (2006), also stated that individuals with diminished capacity due to developmental disabilities or substance dependency are less able to care for their children adequately. Individuals who have difficulties managing their personal choices and emotions often find it difficult to manage and care for children particularly if the children are usually demanding or needy.

Some parents according to Enyia (2020) exhibit serious psychological problems such as distorted dependencies, immaturity, feeling of helplessness or isolation, low self-esteem, or inability to manage anger and may become less able to cope with the

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predictable nature of children or the routine demands of child care. Similarly, Chamhan (2010) stated that children whose parents are physically or mentally handicapped are often more maladjusted than children from more stable homes or intact families. Parents who are alcoholic addicts cannot care for their children adequately, their wives can abuse the children either by beating or spanking or any other physical abuse. Some are sent to work, hawk wares, or even given out as house helps due to the anger caused by excessive drinking of the partner and the inability of the woman to adequately care for the family (Ojigbo, 2004; Okafor, 2010; and Ojo, 2007).

Similarly, some parents who have psychological and emotional problems are often carefree about the attitude of their children; such parents are permissive in their child rearing styles where children are on their own; such children misbehave and often indulge in all types of social vices, and hardly go to school. Instead, such children engage themselves in street trading, prostitution, hawking etc. which invariably affect their academic achievement negatively.

Some parents and caregivers are emotionally unstable in character and may become negative in the upbringing of the children under their care. In such situations, the child is frequently subjected to verbal abuse such as worthless being, good for nothing and blockhead.

Goldberg (2009) and Freeman (2004) emphasized that parents/caregivers who are alcoholics or substance addicts cannot provide adequate care and school needs for their children. Children under this group of parents the researchers further stated, can indulge in social vices that may thwart performance in school. This category of parents and caregivers are permissive in their child rearing practices and school attendance for this group of children raised may not be very defective leading to poor outcomes.

Also Akpan (2014) and Akpotu (2004) stated that some parents preach love but neglect their children; others show love to their biological children and despise their house helps, also some parents are constantly at loggerhead with one another while others are wayward, divorcing one man/woman after another, while others are careless about welfare of their homes; children in this type of home gradually learn and watch parents exhibit such negative behaviours and when these children grow up to maturity they too may not see any harm in putting up such behaviours and behave as such. Every parent/caregiver is a model to the child (Bandura, 1969) what the child observes around his/her environment influences his/her behaviour/performance in school.

Statement of the problem

Concern has been expressed by government, parents, teachers and other stakeholders especially in the study area over the poor attitude as well as poor academic achievement of learners in public secondary school in agricultural science in both internal and external examinations. The government, parents and other education stakeholders are worried because agriculture is the bedrock of our economy, cultivation of crops and the rearing of animals for our usage.

In response to the situation, various studies have been carried out notably by Enyia (2020), Inyang (2011) and Mawah (2009) and the need to address factors such as home, school environment and facilities stressed. Specifically, Enyia (2020) believed that most parents and surrogate parents (teachers, caregivers, guardians) who are autocratic maltreat the children in their child rearing practices or upbringing, influencing the way these children perform in school tasks.

It is therefore thinkable that if this ugly trend continues, the hope of better results in the subject and hopeful painstaking in agricultural science is dashed. The above reason inspired the researchers to this study.

Objectives/purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of parental child rearing practices on the academic achievement of JSS agricultural science students in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study will find out the influence of parental child rearing practices on academic achievement of JSS students in agricultural science.

- Determine the impact of autocratic parental child rearing practices on students academic achievement in agricultural science.
- Examine the impact of Democratic parent-child rearing practices on academic achievement of students in agricultural science.

Justification of the study (with particular reference to Nigeria)

Various extensive research work has been carried out on home background and students academic achievement, as well as the influence of child abuse tendencies notably by Enyia (2020), Ogbaji (2016) and Okafor (2010), what is perhaps new is the influence or impact of parenting styles of child rearing on the academic/cognitive abilities of learners.

Thus, this research work will create awareness and the need for parents/caregivers to be encouraged to adopt the democratic pattern of child rearing to afford them (children) the opportunity to have a voice on what they need at home to support their studies at school positively.

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Thus, this project sought to examine the impact of parental child rearing practices on the academic achievement of students. Based on this, the research is important for the following reasons:

It is hoped that the result will help governments at all levels, civil society organization, and NGOs (Non-governmental organizations) local/international levels to create awareness or enlightenment on the international best practices of child rearing that will adequately care for and support the social and educational needs of the child for wholesome development.

Research questions/hypothesis

To what extent does parental child rearing practices influence the academic performance of students in agricultural science.

Statement of research hypothesis

There is no significant influence of parental child rearing practices on students academic performance in agricultural science.

Scope of the study

This study is limited in scope to senior secondary school students in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. Therefore, any generalization of the results should be done in context of Cross River State or any geopolitical area having similar characteristics.

Also, the study is limited in scope to two variables of study namely; parental child rearing practices and academic performance of the students.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Autocratic parental child rearing practices and students academic performance

The first place children experience some form of order, discipline and obedience is the home (Inyang and Ekpe, 2011). The researchers also stated that child rearing practice has a moderating effect on children's school performance, depending on the style adopted by parents in bringing up of their children.

Onete and Isangedighi (2011), asserted that parenting styles are relevant in the understanding of the child's academic motivation and aspiration. They went on to say that autocratic style does not encourage a strong achievement orientation and may heighten passive behavior and indifference towards school learning.

Also adding credence to the issue of parenting style and school performance Bello (1999), Ogbaji (2016), and Enyia (2020), agreed that low academic achievers are from parents who are not accommodating and who tended to maintain poor relationship with their children as exemplified in autocratic and laissez-fair styles of parenting. The researchers also emphasized that parent-children relationship which is characterized by hostility, lack of communication, rigidity, child battering, excessive supervision, criticism, disparaging actions and neglect create a feeling of worthlessness, lack of confidence, negative self-concept which may introduce negative multiplier effect on the academic performance of the child in school.

Democratic parental child rearing practices and students academic performance

Weiss and Schnadz (2005) predicted that child well-being in all domains of social competence, academic performance psychosocial development and problem behavior depend on child rearing parenting style; the child has the opportunity to contribute to discussions on number of issues and is given the freedom and encouragement to make decisions but such decision must fall in line with the parents approval.

Onete and Isangidighi (2011), asserted that parenting rearing styles have much influence on the behavior of their children, and how they react to situations and challenges. They added that, the explanations given by parents on the rules and regulations, and on the issues affecting the child is a gateway to the child's development of self-esteem, self-confidence and independence.

In a study aimed at determining the effect of parental rearing styles on the adjustment of pre-school children as well as their cognitive ability, Baumrind (2019) discovered that democratic parenting style has a beneficial effect on adolescents' competence and adjustment across a wide array of domains including academic achievement.

Eteng (2016) stated that, parents who use democratic styles with children help them to take risk and accept challenges. According to the researcher, their children will most likely be responsible, self-assured, adaptive, creative, curious, and socially skilled, while authoritarian parental children are dependent, passive, less socially adopt, less self-assured and less intellectually curious.

Also, in democratic homes, Regoli and Hewith (2010) opined that children know when they are meeting expectations and can decide when it is worth risking, parental displeasure or other consequences. These children are also expected to perform well to fulfil commitment and to participate actively in family duties as well as family fun, which tend to reflect in their self-concept and general behavior. These children according to the research can also stand firm and take accurate decisions by themselves unlike children from permissive and authoritarian homes.

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Ogbaji (2016) investigated social variables and deviant behavior tendency among secondary school students in Ogoja, Cross River State, Nigeria found out that children from democratic homes are more active, socially aggressive, fearless, playful, highly curious and more likely to be leaders, while authoritarian families appear to be quiet, conforming, socially unaggressive, lacking in originality and curiosity.

According to a research conducted by Craft (2012), it was seen that families which operate open democratic style of parent-child relationship allow in-flow and outflow of information, high level of communication, functional interaction and learning. He further added that a healthy child-parent relationship and childhood adequate confidence, positive self-concept and emotional stability, are necessary conditions for school learning.

Authoritarian parental rearing practice and students academic performance

According to Enyia (2020), in authoritarian parental child rearing home, the child has the opportunity of expressing his/her opinion on issues, but the final decision is that of the parents based on their judgement. Also, Papalia and Olds (2012) stated that children from authoritarian homes are so strictly controlled by either punishment or guilt that often they cannot make a conscious choice about a particular behavior because they are too concerned about what their parents will do.

To Baumrind (2009) as cited by Berk (2012), pre-scholars with authoritarian parents are anxious, withdrawn and unhappy when interacting with peers, they tend to react with hostility when frustrated. They are also found to be lacking in exploration and would retreat from challenging task, and would not equally perform high in academics.

Darling (2010) observed that children from authoritarian families however tend to perform moderately well in school, but have poor social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher level of depression while according to him, children from indulgent homes are more likely to be involved in problem behavior and perform far less in school.

In a related study, Umo (2016), examined the variables in identity formation among secondary school adolescents in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study had five research questions, converted into research hypotheses. Research design adopted was ex-post facto, while multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select 586 senior secondary I and II students for the study. The instrument employed for data collection was student opinion questionnaire scored on a four point likert student type scale.

Also, contingency chi-square was used to test all five hypotheses. It was revealed that, parenting style among other variables, have significant influence on identity formation of secondary school adolescents in the study area. The research also revealed that children from authoritarian homes or parents are observed to be non-considerate, most times irresponsible and low achievers, while children whose parents are involved perform most poorly in all domains.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

Ex-post facto design was adopted in this study. The design according to Kelinger (1986) is a systematic empirical inquiry in which the researcher (scientist) does not have direct control of independent variables because their manifestation have already occurred or because they are inherently, not manipulable. In other words, the parental attitudes during child-rearing practices or upbringing had already exerted their influence on the academic performance of the students as the dependent variable. The design is aimed at investigating possible cause and effect relationship (Denga & Ali, 1998).

Area of the study

The study covered all public senior secondary schools in Cross River State of Nigeria. Cross River State is located in the South-South geopolitical zone. It lies between latitude 5° 32 and 4;27 North and longitude 70°50 and 2°20 East. The state has a population of about 4.6 million people, (NPC 2005), with a land mass of 23, 074.245 square kilometer. Evergreen forest is the predominant vegetation except in parts of Ogoja and Obudu where grassland features are prominent.

The people are made up of the Efik, Quas, Ejagham, Boki, Ekois, Bekwara and the Bette in Obudu. Their main occupation is farming, fishing, trading and others engaged in white-collar jobs.

There are many places of importance including Calabar seaport, EPZ, Obudu Cattle Ranch, Calabar old residency, National Park, Tinapa etc.

The state has about 280 public secondary schools and many private schools and five (5) tertiary institutions. Cross Riverians are pluralistic in spoken/written languages ranging from Efik Ejagham Bekwara etc.

Population of the study

The research involved all senior secondary school students in 280 public secondary schools in three education zones namely; Calabar, Ikom and Ogoja at the time of this research work. A total of 21,692 senior secondary I and II students, comprising Male

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and Females were attending these schools sited in these zones at the time of this study. A breakdown of this information is presented in table I:

Table I: Distribution of population of Education zone

S/N	Education zone	Number of SS students	Percentage
1	Calabar	7092	32.6
2	Ikom	7000	32.1
3	Ogoja	7600	35.3
	Total	21692	100.0

Source: State secondary Education Board, SSEB (2015)

Sampling technique

Stratified sampling method was employed in selecting schools and simple random sampling procedure was finally adopted to select subjects. Stratified sampling method was adopted because it identifies and addresses heterogeneity in the population and thus reduces sampling error. It also allows for a representative sample.

The schools in the state were first stratified based on senatorial zones, followed by local government areas.

Also, to have a proportionate representation, 5% of the total number of schools in each zone was selected, giving a total of 14 schools from Calabar zone, 16 from Ikom and 19 from Ogoja zone making a total of 49 schools. Based on above procedure, 60 students (30 students from SS I and 30 from SS II) were selected from each sampled school giving a total of 21, 940.

Sample

The sample size of the study was 2,940 students; 1400 males and 1540 females randomly selected from 49 schools.

Table II: Sample distribution of schools and gender.

S/N	Education zone	No of Schools	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
1	Calabar	14	430	410	840	28.5
2	Ikom	16	460	500	960	32.7
3	Ogoja	19	510	630	1140	38.8
Total			1400	1540	2940	100

Instrumentation

Two research instruments were used in this study:

- 1) Parental child rearing practices and students' academic achievement questionnaire (PCRPSAAQ). This instrument basically measured the following variables;
 - a) Parental child rearing practices with sub-variables as (autocratic, democratic and authoritarian rearing styles) and students' academic performance.
 - b) Test on agric science (TAS).

Validity and reliability of the study

The instruments were first subjected to expert judgement for face validity and was certified correct. To ascertain the content validity, the items used in testing students' performance in agric. Science was constructed using first and second syllabus prepared for senior secondary students. It was also examined and certified suitable for SS students.

Cronbach Alpha method and Kuder-Richardson 20 formula were used to test for reliability of the instrument. Each of the instruments adjudged to be valid and reliable to be used for the study.

Table II: Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate

Variables	No of items	Mean	Item variance	SD	Cronbach Alpha value
Parental child rearing practices	10	16.35	3.01	3.02	0.79
Autocratic parental child rearing style	10	17.95	3.11	2.30	0.88
Democratic parental child rearing style	10	15.97	2.77	2.43	0.77

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Authoritarian parental child rearing practice	10	18.17	2.89	2.39	0.82
Overall scale	40	89.72	79.15	8.34	0.92

Statistical analysis technique

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was adopted to analyse the field data obtained. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Table IV: Kuder Richardson Reliability Estimate

Variables	No. of items	KR-20 value
Agric. Science	50	0.77

Table V: Table of specification on agricultural science test

S/N	Content	Knowl edge 60%	Comp rehen sion 20%	Applic ation 20%	Analy sis	Synth esis	Evalu ation	Total
1	Animal husbandry	6	2	2	0	0	0	10
2	Simple farm tools 5%	2	1	1	0	0	0	4
3	Soil 20%	5	1	1	0	0	0	7
4	Grop 20%	6	2	2	0	0	0	10
5	Manure 5%	2	1	1	0	0	0	4
6	Fishery/agriculture 20%	5	2	2	0	0	0	9
7	Farm records 10%	4	1	1	0	0	0	6
	Total	30	10	10	0	0	0	50

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

General description of research variables

The study investigated parental child rearing practices and academic performance of senior secondary school students in agric. Science in Cross River State, Nigeria.

The independent variable of the study was parental child rearing practices while the dependent variable was academic performance. The sub-variables identified under the independent variable were; autocratic parental child rearing style, democratic and authoritarian parental child rearing style. Data for each of the variables were collected both nominally and continuously using the research instruments which were structured questionnaire and agric. Science achievement test.

Table VI: General description of research variables

Variables			Mean	SD
Autocratic parental child rearing style	Low	137	42.00	4.65
	Moderate	2340	40.93	5.38
	High	449	40.23	5.70
Democratic parental child rearing practice or style	Low	237	40.93	5.40
	Moderate	449	40.77	5.29
	High	2140	38.23	5.41
Authoritarian parental child rearing style	Low	130	41.06	5.36
	Moderate	2300	40.39	5.29
	High	490	40.47	5.63

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Presentation of results

Hypothesis I: This was stated as; there is no significant influence of parental child rearing practices on students academic performance in agricultural science.

The independent variable is child rearing practices categorized as (low influence, moderate influence and high influence) and the dependent variable is academic performance in agricultural science. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in table VII.

Table VII: Summary of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the influence of child rearing practices on students academic performance in agricultural science.

Groups	N	\bar{x}	SD
Low influence	137	42.00	4.65
Moderate influence	2340	40.93	5.38
High influence	449	40.23	5.70
Total	2926	40.87	5.41

Source of variation	SS	Df	Ms	F-ratio	R-ratio
Between groups	365.38	2	182.69		
Within groups	85145.27	2923	29.13	6.27	0.002
Total	85510.65	2925			

Significance at 0.05 level; df= 2 and 2925, critical value = 2.99

Table VIII: Bonferroni Post-Hoc test of influence of child rearing practice on students academic performance in agricultural science

Test scores				
Bonferroni				
(I) Rearing style	(J) Rearing style	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	P-value
Low	Moderate	1.074	.474	.071
	High	1.768	.527	.002
Moderate	Low	-1.074	.278	.038
	high	0.695		
High	Low	-1.768	.527	.002
	Moderate	-0.69	.278	.038

The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The result as presented in table 8 revealed the calculated f-value of 2.99 at 0.05 level of significance with 2 and 2925 df. This result indicates that, the cal. F-value is higher than the critical f-value and thus rejecting the null hypothesis. This showed a significant influence of parental child rearing style on students academic performance.

Also, the Bonferroni post-hoc results in table 8 using the significant two-tail (0.000) and mean difference significance at .05, revealed that, there was a significant difference between low and high influence of parental child rearing practice (1.768*, .002*), moderate and high influence (695*, 0.38*). there was no significant difference however between low and moderate influence of child rearing practices on the students performance.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of this research work revealed a significant influence between parental child rearing practices and the academic performance of students in agricultural science. The result of this study is in line with research findings of Graw (2008), Onete and Isangedighi (2011), Eteng (2016), Umo (2016) and Enyia (2020), who found that child rearing practices has a significant influence on academic performance of secondary school students.

Also, that democratic method of rearing children has a positive influence on students learning achievement, while authoritarian method of rearing children has a negative influence on children's learning at school.

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Perhaps, the explanation for the negative influence of child rearing practice is that different families have different ways of rearing children. Parents who use democratic child rearing style are much more free with their children, discussing and communicating easily with them, whereas the authoritarian parents are strict and rigid which may influence school learning of the children negatively, since the children here very often remain fearful and withdrawn. Berk (2013) also emphasized that children of authoritarian parents do not do well in academics always avoiding challenging task.

The permissive parents do not have control over their children because of the non-challant attitudes and children under them seem to have no direction or proper guidance therefore perform poorly in their academics.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study was carried out to determine the influence of parental child rearing practices on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Cross River State. An ex-post facto research design that made use of 2,960 senior secondary school students in Cross River State was adopted. Also, two research instruments were adopted to test one (1) hypothesis that was formulated. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistic was employed to analyse the field data obtained.

On the basis of the findings, it was concluded as follows:

- That different families have different ways of rearing children.
- That significant influence exist between parental child rearing practice and students academic performance in agric. Science.
- Children of autocratic parents lack self-confidence and independence in taking decisions, and poor in cognitive ability, as well as other academic endeavours.
- That democratic parenting have a beneficial effect on adolescents competence and adjustment across a wide array of domains including academic achievement.
- That, children of authoritarian parental child rearing style are dependent, passive, less socially adopt, less self-assured and less intellectually curious.
- That, children whose parents are uninvolved or have leiser faire attitude perform most poorly in all domains.

However, the researchers recommend among other things that, parents/caregivers should be encouraged to adopt the democratic pattern of child rearing to afford them the opportunity to have a voice on what they need at home as well as supporting their students positively.

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